

Wisconsin Waterfowl Association
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting – Wednesday, June 9, 2021

Board Members in virtual attendance: Mike Depies, Dave Elwing, George Ermert, Dennis Fleischer, Jim Freck, Russ Olson, Todd Schaller, and Bruce Urben. Excused: Ian Bartelmez, Joe Gonyo, and Pat Smith.

Also virtually present: Kelcy Boettcher and Bruce Ross

Agenda:

- **6:33 PM – Meeting Convened**

- **6:34 PM – Financials & e-Commerce Assistance Update**

BoD members previously reviewed the financials delivered via email. Kelcy Boettcher reported that we are \$64,000 in the black. Bruce Ross reported that we are ahead of budget. George Ermert enquired how the puppy auction, brat fry and ATV raffle sales went/are going. We raised \$700 through the puppy auction (breeder's cost was \$500 & winning bid was \$1200). The brat fry raised \$190. ATV raffle sales are slow, raising \$6,300 to date; the ATV and trailer cost \$10,844.

E-commerce assistance discussion was postponed in interest of discussing the potential impact of moving back to face-to-face events and the legal ramifications that might limit WWA's ability to continue holding Class A raffles. on Class A raffles.

- **6:38 PM – Bonus Proposal**

Bruce Urben brought May's Staff Bonus discussion to the BoD for decision. The Board voted unanimously to approve salary bonus for the Director of Administration and both RDs. The Executive Director chose not to be considered for a bonus; the Board accepted his desires.

- **6:47 PM – Class A Discussion**

Bruce Ross raised the Bod's awareness about concerns relating to the continued viability of our Class A raffles coming out of the pandemic. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (Do A) provides gaming oversight within the state. Guidelines for non-profit fund raising was relaxed since the start of the pandemic and there is a strong likelihood that closer oversight through an audit may be exercised. FY 20 and 21 realized great financial upswing through online Class A raffle sales. 2021 Chapter Super Goals are tied to these raffles. The question is, "How should WWA proceed?" WWA has made efforts to comply with DoA's guidelines, but we are unsure if that is enough. WWA could potentially lose its Class A license, causing a significant impact of revenue streams. George Ermert suggested having an attorney review WWA's actions for compliance (he will pursue discussions and get a cost estimate). Bruce Ross will also follow-up with Tom Siebert for previous DoA audit results. George and Bruce will report findings during July's BoD meeting.

- **7:16 PM - Development Committee: Survey Progress**

Dave Elwing briefly reported that the Demographic survey is behind schedule; he will finalize questions based upon BoD input received and work with Bruce Ross to format the survey. BoD members will be afforded one final review prior to release via email. 30 days following the survey's email releases, the Development Committee will release virtually the same survey on Facebook to extend the potential number of responses. Facebook 30 days later.

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- **7:23 PM Increasing Chapter Engagement**

The Development Committee proposed a virtual, hour long “Meet the President & Executive Director” hour to extend visibility for WWA’s efforts and to dialog with our general membership. The event will occur on 14 July (time remains TBD). This is envisioned as the initial steps of the Development Committee’s chapter outreach effort. While this is open to all members, follow-on Zoom sessions will target chapters with the intent to increase dialog between chapters and establish a self-help efforts where chapters can bring in “lessons learned” examples and other chapters can ask questions to better understand them. This will also be a venue for chapters to ask for “how to” pointers. The ideal format will be a 10-15 minute topic led by the Development Committee followed by an open forum. We will solicit discussion topics from chapters to shape the way ahead.

- **7:24 PM – Planned Giving Update**

Russ Olson reported that he contacted a firm called “Planned Giving” that provides an “EZ Button” estate giving mechanism called “Planning Giving in a Box.” Planned Giving in a Box provides WWA an established website which gets “logo’d” for WWA and marketing materials for WWA to use when reaching out to potential donors. Planned Giving has established checks and balances which afford donors a “peace of mind,” while at the same time offering WWA a turn-key funding mechanism that can be used to establish “endowment type” sources (the average gifting is \$46K). Target demographic will initially be WWA founders and Hall of Famers. Planned Giving’s website also offers Donors estate organizing tips. A Planned Giving in a Box 2-year membership is \$5,999, after which we keep all unused marketing materials. Renewal of full services is another \$5,999, but renewal of website only support is \$400. Russ Olson and Bruce Ross will prepare a memorandum for the July BoD meeting.

- **7: 34 PM – Committee Updates**

Education Committee (Bruce Urben presented): Three new volunteers joined the Education Committee as a result of its last meeting and follow-on one-on-one discussions with Bruce Urben. The committee agreed to put an “education focus” in every WWA event and communication. Todd Schaller’s 2d in a series of (4) sandhill crane educational articles appeared in this month’s newsletter. Next meeting will be 28 June.

Habitat Committee (Jim Freck presented): The committee continues to increase public awareness through E. J. Grassmann’s habitat outreach efforts to groups like Pheasants Forever.

Policy/Advocacy Committee (Bruce Ross presented): The duck stamp increase remains in the proposed budget and moves forward to the Governor for approval or veto. The legislature's Joint Committee on Finance voted on 10 June to renew the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program for 4 years at 32 million dollars per year.

Communications/Membership Committee (George Ermert presented): The membership drive started on 9 June. The goal is to add 500 memberships.

Development Committee (Dave Elwing presented): The Wausau area “Pint Night” date is set for 6 August at the Wausau Gun Skeet & Trap Club (T196 County Road WW, Wausau, WI 54403). Abe Shinnars met with the club’s manager and met several other former WWA members who may become potential chapter committee members (one has an old Wausau Chapter contact list that Abe will combine with the Marathon County WWA membership list that Kelcy Boettcher

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provided. Bruce Urben will speak as WWA's President and spotlight Urben Decoys. The evening's focus is to recruit Chapter committee members. During the last committee meeting Dennis Fleischer introduced the idea of WWA reaching to competitive youth shotgunners and the gun clubs where they shoot as a new membership/new funding source. He presented the skeleton idea to the BoD and will return with a more fleshed-out discussion during the July BoD meeting. The next Development Committee meeting will be 14 July.

- **8:05 PM– Green Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR)**

In the interest of time the NERR update was postponed to a later BoD meeting.

- **8:06 PM– EXPO Update**

Bruce Ross informed the Board that the EXPO is in the black. Booths remain available and each sale pushes us further into the black. Todd Schaller's coordinating with all EXPO partners (DU, Delta, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, Green Bay Duck Hunters, and WWA) remains ongoing and George Ermert's efforts to organize BoD and staff support will be discussed during the July BoD meeting. The Board's focus is primarily recruiting and marketing through manning both of our booths. Board and staff members are to contact George to confirm their availability and provide booth suggestions if they have not already done so. Additionally, BoD members need to provide shirt sizes for an Expo polo shirt to Bruce Ross.

- **8:20 PM – President's Recap/Action Items**

Bruce Urben did a recap of tonight's agenda and action items. Action items include:

- 1) The BoD unanimously approved the Staff Bonus plan as Bruce Ross presented it.
- 2) Regarding Class A raffles, George Ermert will bring estimates for attorney reviews of WWA's DoA compliance to the July BoD meeting. Bruce Ross will talk to Tome Seibert regarding past DoA audits/inspections and present findings/previous actions during July's BoD meeting.
- 3) Dave Elwing will finalize the WWA Membership Survey and work with Bruce Ross to format it for the survey tool. BoD members will be afforded one final review prior to release.
- 4) The "Increase Chapter Engagement" goes public on 14 July with the "Meet the WWA President & Executive Director" Zoom session on 14 July.
- 5) Russ Olson will present a "Planned Giving in a Box" during the July BoD meeting.
- 6) The Development Committee will finalize the Wausau Pint Night and present the night's agenda and purpose to the BoD during July's meeting. BoD participation will be confirmed, as well.
- 7) BoD members need to provide shirt sizes for an Expo polo shirt to Bruce Ross.

- **8:35 PM – Meeting Adjourned**

The next board meeting will be Wednesday July 21st from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM via Zoom.